

# FACT SHEET

June 2006



## CONTACT:

### PROGRAM CONTACT

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## Notice to Caregivers

### *The Policy Change*

Effective July 5, 2006, Children's Administration requires social workers to provide advance notice to you as a caregivers when a Court Hearing or case staffing, involving a child in your care, is scheduled.

### *Timeframes for Notice to Caregiver*

As a caregiver, you will be notified by a CA:

- Within 10-days of a Court Review Hearing regarding the child in your care. The notice will be provided in writing and will include a copy of the Individual Service and Safety Plan (ISSP). If a court review hearing is scheduled sooner (e.g. within 7 days) and does not allow enough time for a 10-day notice, CA will notify you as soon as possible, by phone, e-mail or face to face.
- Within 48 hours (when possible) of a case staffing regarding the child in your care. If an emergency meeting is called, you will receive notice as soon as possible. Notification will occur by phone, e-mail, face to face or in writing.

### *Attending Court Hearings*

As the caregiver, you may attend the Court Hearings in person and/or submit a written statement with information about the child(ren) in your care. At the hearing, the Court typically wants to hear:

- How the child is doing in school
- How the child is adjusting in your home
- If there are any medical or counseling needs
- If you have thoughts or ideas on the child's case plan.

Due to differences in Court procedures, the Court makes the decision whether or not you will speak directly to the Court or provide a written report. Your child's social worker can provide more information about the Court procedures and how to provide information about the child to the Court.

### *If you are unable to attend a Court hearing or a case staffing*

#### Court Hearing

If you are unable to attend a Court Hearing or would prefer to provide your views and recommendations in writing, you can fill out the *Caregivers Report to the Court* form (available from your CA social worker and on the Foster Parent website at: <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/index.asp>) or use the form as a guide. This form allows you to give the Court information about how the child is doing. The social worker or the Guardian Ad Litem for the child can file your written report with the Court.

#### Case staffing

If you are unable to participate in the shared planning meeting, CA will request a written report from you and present your views and recommendations at the staffing.